

Learning English with CBC Calgary

Weekly Newscast

October 4th, 2013

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Objectives of the weekly newscast lesson

- to develop listening skills at the CLB 4 level
- to increase vocabulary among learners
- to increase knowledge of news stories
- to provide a self-study tool, as well as an ESL classroom resource



www.alberta.ca

<http://www.cbc.ca/calgary/learning-english/>

News story #1

Before you listen to the first news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Match the words with their definitions. *Answers are in the appendix.*

| Answer | Word | Definition |
|--------|---------------|--|
| | 1. services | a) well known |
| | 2. partly | b) money given for certain purposes |
| | 3. shutdown | c) a building or statue made in memory of someone or something |
| | 4. funding | d) something that represents something else |
| | 5. delay | e) things provided by the government for the public to use |
| | 6. famous | f) people who sleep in tents or trailers outside in the wilderness |
| | 7. symbol | g) not completely; half or some part of |
| | 8. monument | h) people working in the government who make laws |
| | 9. campers | i) closed |
| | 10. lawmakers | j) to slow down or postpone something from happening |

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

civil servants – people who work for the government to provide services for the public

Now listen to the first news story from the audio file.

Listening activity: Multiple Choice

Choose the best answer to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Hundreds of civil servants in America are _____. | a) out of work. b) back to work. |
| 2. American services are closed and the U.S. government is _____. | a) mostly closed. b) partly shutdown. |
| 3. _____ for much of the government was stopped. | a) Support b) Funding |
| 4. Republicans tried to _____ law they call "Obamacare." | a) delay the health care b) pass the health care |
| 5. America's most famous _____ are closed. | a) symbols and natural wonders b) places and parks |
| 6. Some lawmakers say the shutdown might _____. | a) continue for weeks. b) stop at last. |

Discussion Questions

How do you think the shutdown of the government will affect the average person in America?

What services do you think are the most important for the public?

News story #2

Before you listen to the second news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Use one of the vocabulary words below to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| investigating (looking into) | close call (a narrow escape) | figure out (understand) |
| escape (get free) | enclosure (pen) | injured (hurt) |
| | | determine (decide) |

1. The car ran through the red light and the pedestrians had a _____.
2. I need to _____ these math problems so I can finish my homework.
3. The teachers at my son's school are _____ who broke the windows.
4. I like the Calgary Zoo because the _____ are big and the animals have a great environment.
5. My daughter needs to _____ which College she is going to attend after high school.
6. Our dog got _____ after he managed to _____ from our backyard.

Listening Activity: True/False

Decide whether the statements below are **true** or **false**. Write your answer in the blanks. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. ____ The gorillas at the Calgary Zoo were found walking around outside.
2. ____ They escaped over the weekend,
3. ____ This is the third time the gorillas have escaped.
4. ____ Last time they escaped a zoo keeper was fired.
5. ____ Last time they escaped a zoo keeper was injured.
6. ____ The zoo is trying to figure out what went wrong.

Discussion Questions

Do you enjoy visiting zoos? Some people believe zoos are the only way to save animals, while others think they are cruel because the animals are locked up. What do you think about zoos?

News story #3

Before you listen to the third news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Choose the group of synonyms (words with similar meaning) that best match each of the vocabulary words. *Answers are in the appendix.*

| Answer | Word from the story | Related words |
|--------|---------------------|---|
| | 1) season | a) throw away stop |
| | 2) ugly | b) argument discussion |
| | 3) smashed | c) period time |
| | 4) stretcher | d) hit hard banged |
| | 5) get rid of | e) event accident |
| | 6) incident | f) flat board moving bed for emergencies |
| | 7) debate | g) terrible not pretty |

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

concussion – injury to the brain caused by hitting the head hard

commissioner – the official or representative in charge

Now listen to the third news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: Short Answer

Read and answer the questions below. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. When did the NHL season begin?
2. Which two NHL teams are in this story?
3. What were players Colton Orr and George Parros doing in the third period?
4. What happened to Parros?
5. How did Parros get off the ice?
6. What did NHL commissioner Gary Bettman say about fighting in hockey?
7. What is this event doing?

Discussion Questions

Do you think players should be allowed to fight in sports? Do you think fighting is a part of hockey?

Language Focus

Passive Voice

In the **Active Voice**, we focus on who is doing the action because the subject of the sentence is the doer of the action.

Ex: The police *investigated the fire*.

In the **Passive Voice**, we focus on the action itself or on the object receiving the action, rather than who is doing it. The subject of the sentence receives the action.

Ex: The fire *was investigated* (by police.)

We use the passive voice in three situations:

1. When the doer of the action is unknown, or not important.
2. When we want to express that the action/event is more important than the actor.
3. When we write a scientific paper or lab report.

Forming the passive voice : ‘be’ verb + past participle of the main verb.

Present tense: The U.S. government **is** partly **shut down** (phrasal verb).

Past tense: It is unknown how the fire **was started**.

Future tense: The criminal **will be sent** to jail.

Let’s look at some examples adapted from our stories this week. Which sentences are in the active voice? Which are in the passive voice? Highlight the verbs. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. Hundreds of thousands of civil servants are out of work and services are closed...
2. Funding for much of the U.S. government was stopped.
3. The Republicans tried to delay the health care law they call “Obamacare.”
4. Across the U.S., America’s most famous symbols were closed.
5. All the natural wonders put up “Closed” signs.
6. Some law makers say the shutdown might last for weeks.
7. A zoo employee was injured.
8. A keeper was fired after that incident.

Transcripts of Weekly News Stories

| | OCTOBER 4 TH WEEKLY NEWS STORIES | TIME |
|--------------|--|-------|
| Introduction | Hi, this is Rosa Marchitelli. You're listening to Learning English with CBC for October 4 th . | 0:00 |
| Story 1 | Hundreds of thousands of civil servants are out of work and services are closed as the U.S. government is partly shut down. Funding for much of the U.S. government was stopped after Republicans tried to delay the health care law they call "Obamacare." Across the U.S., America's most famous symbols were closed: the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, the Statue of Liberty in New York, Mount Rushmore in South Dakota, and the Washington Monument; and natural wonders - the Grand Canyon, Yosemite and more - put up "Closed" signs and sent campers away. Some lawmakers say the shutdown might last for weeks. | 0:11 |
| Story 2 | The Calgary Zoo is investigating another close call with its gorillas. The zoo is trying to figure out how the gorillas managed to escape their enclosure again. The latest escape happened over the weekend. The animals made their way from their enclosure into the keeper's kitchen. It's their second escape this year. In March, a zoo employee was injured when the gorillas went into the kitchen. A keeper was fired after that incident. The zoo is now working to determine what went wrong this time. | 01:04 |
| Story 3 | The NHL season got going Tuesday and it was ugly. In the third period of the fight-filled game between the Toronto Maple Leafs and the Montreal Canadiens, the Leafs' Colton Orr and Montreal's George Parros were fighting. They fell, and Parros's face smashed into the ice. He left the ice on a stretcher and has a concussion. NHL commissioner Gary Bettman has said there are no plans to get rid of fighting in hockey. But this incident is re-starting the debate. | 01:47 |

Answer keys

News story 1

Vocabulary

| Answer | Word | Definition |
|--------|---------------|--|
| e | 1. services | a) well known |
| g | 2. partly | b) money given for certain purposes |
| i | 3. shutdown | c) a building or statue made in memory of someone or something |
| b | 4. funding | d) something that represents something else |
| j | 5. delay | e) things provided by the government for the public to use |
| a | 6. famous | f) people who sleep in tents or trailers outside in the wilderness |
| d | 7. symbol | g) not completely; half or some part of |
| c | 8. monument | h) people working in the government who make laws |
| f | 9. campers | i) closed |
| h | 10. lawmakers | j) to slow down or postpone something from happening |

Listening

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Hundreds of civil servants in America are _____. | a) out of work. b) back to work. |
| 2. American services are closed and the U.S. government is _____. | a) mostly closed. b) partly shutdown. |
| 3. _____ for much of the government was stopped. | a) Support b) Funding |
| 4. Republicans tried to _____ law they call "Obamacare." | a) delay the health care b) pass the health care |
| 5. America's most famous _____ are closed. | a) symbols and natural wonders b) places and parks |
| 6. Some lawmakers say the shutdown might _____. | a) continue for weeks. b) stop at last. |

News story 2

Vocabulary

- The car ran through the red light and the pedestrians had a **close call**.
- I need to **figure out** these math problems so I can finish my homework.
- The teachers at my son's school are **investigating** who broke the windows.
- I like the Calgary Zoo because the **enclosures** are big and the animals have a great environment.
- My daughter needs to **determine** which College she is going to attend after high school.

6. Our dog got **injured** after he managed to **escape** from our backyard.

Listening

1. **F** The gorillas at the Calgary Zoo were found walking around outside.
2. **T** They escaped over the weekend,
3. **F** This is the third time the gorillas have escaped.
4. **T** Last time they escaped a zoo keeper was fired.
5. **T** Last time they escaped a zoo keeper was injured.
6. **T** The zoo is trying to figure out what went wrong.

News story 3

Vocabulary

| Answer | Word from the story | Related words |
|----------|---------------------|---|
| c | 1) season | a) throw away stop |
| g | 2) ugly | b) argument discussion |
| d | 3) smashed | c) period time |
| f | 4) stretcher | d) hit hard banged |
| a | 5) get rid of | e) event accident |
| e | 6) incident | f) flat board moving bed for emergencies |
| b | 7) debate | g) terrible not pretty |

Listening

1. When did the NHL season begin? *It began last Tuesday.*
2. Which two NHL teams are in this story? *Toronto Maple Leafs and the Montreal Canadiens*
3. What were players Colton Orr and George Parros doing in the third period? *They were fighting.*
4. What happened to Parros? *He fell on the ice and smashed his face.*
5. How did Parros get off the ice? *He was carried out on a stretcher (by paramedics.)*
6. What did NHL commissioner Gary Bettman say about fighting in hockey? *He said there are no plans to get rid of fighting in hockey.*
7. What is this event doing? *This incident is re-starting the debate – if fighting should be allowed in hockey or not.*

Language focus

1. Hundreds of thousands of civil servants are out of work (adjective phrase) and services **are closed**... (passive voice)
2. Funding for much of the U.S. government **was stopped**. (passive voice)
3. The Republicans **tried** to delay the health care law they call "Obamacare." (active voice)
4. Across the U.S., America's most famous symbols **were closed**. (passive voice)
5. All the natural wonders **put up** (phrasal verb) "Closed" signs. (active voice)
6. Some law makers **say** the shutdown might last for weeks. (active voice)

7. It could be weeks before the cause of the huge fire in southwest Edmonton **is known**. (passive voice)
8. The fire at Rutherford Landing **happened** early in the morning Sunday, September 29th. (active voice)
9. The fire **brought down** (phrasal verb) three buildings. (active voice)
10. One building **was** almost **finished** and new owners **were set** to move in this December. (passive voice)
11. In total, 265 units **were destroyed**. (passive voice)
12. The company building the condos **says** it will rebuild the complex. (active voice)